

Try to think of its uses.

- (a) To beautify ugly places.
- (b) The cold tops of pine touched by clouds.
When a cloud touches something cold, rain falls.
Therefore pines are the cause of many rainfalls.
When pine forests are cut down the springs and rivulets
have been known to dry up.
Palestine is a parched land for this reason.
Old Chinese proverb: "The mightiest rivers are cradled in
the leaves of the pine."
- (c) Third use.
Will fruit ripen on north wall? No; too cold.
Will it on the opposite side of the wall? Yes; the wall
protects it.
In pine countries the people build their houses and gardens
on the side of the forest, away from the wind, and thus
are sheltered.
- (d) Fourth use.
Great lumps of ice and snow sometimes slip from the tops
of mountains and would fall upon the villages below if
the pines did not act as a barrier. When the people are
foolish enough to cut down the trees the snow falls on
their villages and destroys them.

IX. Repeat these four uses of the pine.

What then does God tell us of Himself, by these trees?

That He is wise; that He is kind and pitiful; that He
makes things useful by simple and natural means.

X. Next time we will see how He has fitted the pine for the
work that it does.

F. RANKIN.

A SUMMER VISIT TO THE NEW ZEALAND BUSH.

It was in November, 1892, that we reached New Zealand, and there we had our first experience of Bush life.

After a day or two spent in Wellington we crossed Cook Strait in lovely calm weather—a very rare occurrence—and towards evening entered the Pelorus Sound in the South Island. There we pursued a tortuous course, winding and twisting round promontories, into bays, through narrow straits, and across wide lagoons, the steep hillsides being covered from summit to base with dense forest. Occasionally there are clearings where the settlers have felled and burnt down the luxuriant growth, and the slopes and downs were covered with sheep. Here and there, near a good stream, might be seen a squatter's wooden house, but these were few and far between, from four to six miles or more. Those only who live on the shore of the Sound are enlivened by a sight of the passing boats and schooners, and the visit of the fortnightly steamer calling for delivery of mails is the greatest excitement in life. The post offices occur at intervals of nine or ten miles or more, and all who want letters must pull that distance in a boat on the chance of receiving one. If too busy to fetch our mail fortnightly we were often a month or two without intercourse with the outer world; in this way we often mistook the day and date of the month. Then we would get an enormous and welcome budget of home news and illustrated papers, the pictures of which are generally used to ornament the walls. One hut I saw was entirely papered with the daily newspapers, and on the top of this coloured pictures and photographs were pasted and hung for ornament.

It was quite dark when we arrived at our destination, so much so, indeed that we expected our vessel to ground every moment, as the mountains seemed closing in upon us. In the darkness a faint light was just visible and, in answer to the steamer's whistle, a house door was thrown open and the light flashed out. After the excitement and bustle of our arrival we found ourselves in a comfortable, simply-furnished kitchen, partaking of a very English tea

at 11 o'clock p.m. Our only lights were a lantern and a candle in a very primitive candlestick—a flat piece of wood with three old upright nails.

Next morning we inspected all the immediate neighbourhood; the house was very small, built entirely of wood and raised on piles on account of the damp and earthquakes, of both of which we had some experience while in New Zealand. The house stood on flat ground near two good streams of water, with a little garden in front running down to the edge of the sea, which at high tide dashed against our fence. Close at hand was a wharé, where the men slept, and a dairy built over a brook, which also served as larder, and here on the platform outside was the scene of our weekly wash. Our clothes, when hung out to dry, were often carried out to sea by the wind, sometimes being returned by the next tide, sometimes not. Beyond and behind a few paddocks for sheep stood the virgin Bush, looking dark and deliciously cool on a hot day. We penetrated a little way, lured on by the marvellous beauty of ferns and mosses into its fascinating depths, coming across shrubs with beautiful foliage and flowers, such as the *Maunca* with the white and the *Arata* vine with the brilliant scarlet blossoms. One beauty of the Bush is that it is evergreen, the leaves never all dying together, but a new one taking the place of the old one at once. We were often pulled up short by terrible creepers forming a network on the ground, and were constantly thrown down when least expecting it by supple Jacks. These with the "lawyers"—a creeper covered with long thorns—form an impenetrable mass of undergrowth only to be cut through with an axe. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the ferns. Not only do they carpet the ground, but cover the trunks of trees as our ivy does, or like the Polypodies. The "Gigi" also, with its long pendulous streamers of pale green, seem like a decoration on the tall stumps and branches of trees. We often retreated to the cool of the Bush during the hot summer, a favourite place being near a little waterfall overshadowed with Tree-ferns and Nikan Palms. Here we read or sketched, enjoying the coolest shade, untroubled by any thoughts of snakes or crawling things, looking through a trellis of leaves on to the wide stretch of water before us and the distant hills. The dear little Robin, with his buff coat instead of red, would hop down beside us or perch upon us—not shy, because unsuspecting of danger.

The mustering of the sheep was a very lively and exciting process, and in which we took a very active part. This always had to be done when the larder was empty. Mutton was, of course, our chief diet; but when we wanted to vary it, we had only to launch

our boat and anchor it near a well-known fishing-ground, and in less than an hour we had got a bucketful of fish. One day we got rather more than we bargained for, and that was a shark over seven feet long. We had a sharp tussle with him, and we ladies had to put our weight on the opposite side of the boat to balance it and also because we were being splashed with water by the lashing of the monster's tail. However, he was at last despatched by the knife and we towed him home. We did not cook any of the flesh for food, though the Maoris eat it and are very fond of it. The oil extracted from this fish is used for iron tools, for if once rubbed with it they never rust.

Our fishing expeditions were always very exciting, as the fish caught were strangers to us—Rock Cod, Butterfish, Kawei, Ground Sharks, and Red Gurnet (a lovely scarlet-coloured fish, with butterfly wings of blue and black, and which, when caught, lay in the bottom of the boat sighing and groaning in a horribly human-like manner).

I will now bring my remarks to a close, as once started on the engrossing subject of the fish, porpoises, birds, ferns, trees, bush-fires and other delights and beauties of this country, I find it difficult not to "yarn" and fill pages with my experiences and wanderings on the other side of the world, thereby wearying my readers, if any such there be.

E. MAUD.